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Sen. Hammerstrom's Lotus Blossom bill signed into law

Lotus Blossom is state's clean water symbol

LANSING – The American Lotus Blossom is now the symbol for clean water in Michigan, announced Sen. Bev Hammerstrom, R-Temperance.

Public Act 78 of 2004, sponsored by Hammerstrom and approved by the governor earlier this week, was introduced after a Monroe County resident addressed the Great Lakes Taskforce at a local hearing conducted in 2001.

Jeanne Micka, past president of the Monroe County Lotus Garden Club, suggested the American Lotus be named the state's clean water symbol after giving a presentation on the nation's largest aquatic plant. She also conveyed to the task force the fear of the blossom's imminent extinction in Michigan due to sewage discharges and industrial pollution in the Great Lakes.

Hammerstrom re-introduced Senate Bill 106 this session after it failed to move last session.

"I am pleased that Mrs. Micka's vision of establishing the lotus blossom as the state symbol for clean water has become a reality," said Hammerstrom, taskforce vice-chair. "She and the members of the Monroe County Lotus Garden Club have worked hard to educate the public about the lotus blossom and its beauty."

Since the taskforce hearings ended, the lotus blossom has made a dramatic comeback and beds of the plant have shown up along the Lake Erie shoreline. This surprise abundance has led the city of Monroe to adopt the lotus blossom as its official city logo.

In addition to Monroe, the lotus has also been identified in four other counties across Michigan, including Berrien, Kalamazoo, Ottawa and Wayne.

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